

# Dr M: Pact on climate needs changes

From K. Bala.

RIO DE JANEIRO, Fri. — Malaysia will only sign the convention on climate change if targets are set to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

As it stands, the convention is vague, said Dr Mahathir, who arrived here yesterday to attend the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development's (UNCED's) heads of Government summit beginning today.

"If the provisions are changed and incorporate the amount of reduction and target date, we will sign in the near future," he told newsmen.

On the continued pressure by the North to have a forest convention, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia and the South countries would resist any such attempt.

He said the principles on forests should be established first, including the sovereignty of the nations to manage their own forests.

"There may come a time when a convention may be needed but not at present. If people want to control forests through a convention, then there is also need for a convention on global warming. You cannot have one without the other," he said.

Dr Mahathir also pointed out that the convention on climate change had been so diluted that it had become meaningless.

Responding to reports that certain leaders of the North, including British Prime Minister John Major, would raise the need for a convention during the summit of leaders, Dr Mahathir said:

"We are reasonable people and will hear what they have to say".

On the United States' refusal to sign the bio-diversity convention, he said the tropical forest nations were disappointed.

"We feel that when bio-diversity refers to the gene-rich banks of the tropical countries, it is only fair that they have a share in whatever happens to the genes.

"But to think it is purely intellectual property of the people who take the genes and make something of them, is very inconsiderate to the tropical forest countries," he said.

The United States is alone in not ratifying the convention in order to protect its bio-tech industries.

Dr Mahathir will sign the legally binding convention today.

He said Malaysia decided to sign the convention be-

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# PM: North failed to keep word on additional funds

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cause it met some of the expectations of sharing the wealth.

Asked for his views on the reluctance of developed nations to commit additional funds, he said in the '60s the North had promised to provide 0.7 per cent of their Gross National Product to help poor countries.

"Except for a few nations, many of them failed to keep their promise. That is why the South countries want a firm commitment of 0.7 per cent of the GNP to fund Agenda 21, the blueprint for action on environment."

"If we do not get them to commit 0.7 per cent to the general environment facility of the World Bank, then we may face the same situation again," he said.

On the success of UNCED thus far, he said, it had generated environment consciousness especially with the presence of more than 100 leaders, but added that its success could only be

measured based on development after the Rio summit.

Soon after his arrival, the Prime Minister had a meeting with Malaysian delegation officials on the progress of UNCED.

Later, he met German Chancellor Helmut Kohl for talks on political, economic and environmental matters.

Dr Mahathir told Kohl that the North had the technology to combat pollution unlike the poorer South.

"Kohl seems to share our view that there should be no profiteering on environment," he said.

Later at night, Dr Mahathir and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali attended a reception hosted by the Malaysian embassy for some leaders and delegation members from participating countries, including non-governmental organisations.

A documentary on the Malaysian proposal for the greening of the world was also screened.